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DE RUEHAH #1133 2921138
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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9572
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2898
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0719
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0595
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1171
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001133

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
COMMERCE FOR HUEPER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: POULTRY AMENDMENT DOUBTFUL TO ALLEVIATE SHORTAGE

REF: ASHGABAT 1056

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (U) On October 1, President Berdimuhamedov signed an amendment to agricultural legislation that makes poultry producers exempt from tax on profits for the next three years, starting from the date of registration of the investment project. The law is aimed at increasing domestic poultry production. However, the ban on importing poultry, initiated in 2006 in response to an outbreak of avian flu, remains in place. (NOTE: The ban is on live birds and eggs, but, in practice, the government also bans frozen poultry. END NOTE.) The ban continues to hamper domestic production since local producers cannot bring in eggs and chicks to refresh their stocks.

13. (SBU) Since the importation ban, there have been periodic shortages of chicken in Ashgabat and elsewhere. For the past month, eggs have also been in short supply. Rumors abound as to the cause, ranging from the government or criminal elements trying to corner the market or the fact that a certain Turkish-German chicken farm was closed. The Charge once had to bargain for a few eggs from a small vendor at a market after being told by someone with a truck full that there were no eggs for sale. Banning the importation of poultry and eggs is, no doubt, a major contributing factor to the problem.

14. (SBU) COMMENT: Whatever the reasons for the shortage, lifting the ban on importation of poultry will certainly make chicken more plentiful and lower the price (reftel). Now may be the time to ask that Turkmenistan allow the importation of poultry from countries that have not suffered outbreaks of avian influenza, like the United States. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND